

Better care could have saved 45 babies: UK maternity probe

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Forty-five babies who died at two British hospitals might have survived if their care had been better, the author of an independent investigation into poor maternity services said Wednesday, adding that his report's

findings were "stark" and "shocking".

Bill Kirkup's report found that "had care been given to the nationally recognised standards, the outcome could have been different... in 45 of the 65 baby deaths" examined.

He told reporters there had been "failures of professionalism of compassion and of kindness" at East Kent Hospitals NHS Trust.

"Women were not listened to... they were disregarded and that led directly to instances of harm" including baby deaths, he said.

The doctor, who seven years ago published similar findings after probing baby deaths at another group of hospitals in northwestern England, said lessons had once again not been learned.

"On at least eight separate occasions over a 10-year period, the trust board (at East Kent) was presented with what should have been inescapable signals that there were serious problems.

"They could have put it right. The first instance was in 2010 but they didn't. In every single case they found a way to deny that there were problems."

The shocking findings about the state of some of Britain's maternity services come on top of two other similar scandals and another [probe](#) that was announced in May.

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